

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting held on 4th August 2016 at 3.30 pm

Present:

Councillor P H MurphyChairman
Councillor N ThwaitesVice-Chairman

Councillor I Aldridge
Councillor G S Dowding
Councillor J Parbrook

Councillor R Clifford
Councillor B Heywood
Councillor R Woods

Members in Attendance:

Councillor A Trollope-Bellew
Councillor M Dewdney
Councillor M Chilcott

Officers in Attendance:

Assistant Chief Executive & Monitoring Officer – B. Lang
Assistant Director – Operational Delivery – C. Hall
Democratic Services Co-ordinator – E. McGuinness
Democratic Services Officer (Scrutiny) – M. Prouse

SC 21 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs B Leaker and B Maitland-Walker.

Substitutions: Cllr B. Heywood for Cllr B. Maitland-Walker.

SC 22 Minutes

(Minutes of the Meeting of the Scrutiny Committee held on 16th June 2016 –
circulated with the Agenda.)

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Scrutiny Committee held on 16th June 2016
were accepted as a correct record subject to the following amendments:

- Starting on Page 7 and continuing to Page 15, the SC number down the margins should start at SC 1 and finish at SC 13 reflecting the annual refresh since the beginning of the new municipal year.
- Cllr B. Heywood stated that he was present at the meeting of the 16th June but was omitted from the attendance list.

(Minutes of the Meeting of the Scrutiny Committee held on 12th July 2016 – circulated with the Agenda.)

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Scrutiny Committee held on 12th July 2016 were accepted as a correct record subject to the following amendments:

- Members requested a change to the language regarding the item of the Business Case, reflecting that they had 'Resolved without a vote' rather than just 'Resolved' anything on that particular item.

SC 23 Declarations of Interest

Members present at the meeting declared the following personal interests in their capacity as a Member of a County, Parish or Town Council:

Name	Minute No.	Description of Interest	Personal or Prejudicial or Disclosable Pecuniary	Action Taken
Cllr I Aldridge	All Items	Williton	Personal	Spoke and voted
Cllr P H Murphy	All Items	Watchet	Personal	Spoke and voted
Cllr J Parbrook	All items	Minehead	Personal	Spoke and voted
Cllr N Thwaites	All items	Dulverton	Personal	Spoke and voted
Cllr A Trollope-Bellew	All items	Crowcombe	Personal	Spoke

SC 24 Public Participation

No members of the public spoke at the meeting on any item on the agenda.

SC 25 Notes of Key Cabinet Decisions/Action Points

(Copy of Notes of Cabinet Decisions/Action Points, circulated at the meeting.)

RESOLVED that the Key Cabinet Decisions/Action Points from the meeting of the Cabinet held on 13 July 2016, be noted.

SC 26 Cabinet Forward Plan

(Copy of the Cabinet Forward Plan published 20 July 2016, circulated at the meeting)

RESOLVED that the Cabinet Forward Plan published on 20 July 2016, be noted.

SC 27 Chairman's announcements

- Cllrs were thanked for their support of the recent Scrutiny Questioning Skills Training Event at Flook House in Taunton, which was considered a valuable session and was well attended by Members of WSC Scrutiny that was good to see.

- Cllrs were reminded of the convening of another Special Scrutiny Meeting at 10.30am on the 16th of August, which was requested at the informal Full Council Meeting on the 26th July. There will be a pre-meeting commencing at 9am on that day also for those Members who are interested.

SC 28 Exclusion of the Press and Public

RESOLVED that the press and public be excluded during consideration of Item SC29 on the grounds that, if the press and public were present during that item, there would be likely to be a disclosure to them of exempt information of the class specified in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended as follows:

The item contained information that could release confidential information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information). It is therefore agreed that after consideration of all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

SC 29 Commercially Confidential – Street and Public Toilet Cleaning Retendering

Councillor Martin Dewdney – Lead Member Environment presented this item.

The purpose of this report is to identify the process used to bring a compliant procurement activity to a position where a new contract to deliver street and toilet cleaning for West Somerset Council can be awarded.

If Members approved the recommendations the new contract price would represent an increase of £13k pa against the approved budget based on a full year.

During discussion, the following points were raised:

- There was emphasis from the Lead Member that there was no cross-subsidy in this contract, that the price was the same.
- The delay in the process was due to a large submission of questions by the bidders.
- Members raised queries around common standards of cleanliness that were expected, specifically around the language of 'reduction in standard' in the report?
- Officers reassured Members that the preferred bidder was committed to keeping a pro-active approach to delivering the contract and complying with the legislation as required under the Environmental Protection Act 1990.
- Officer stated that there was a cap on the profitability on the contract, which also applied to third party groups such as Parish Councils who may wish to buy into a menu of extra services.
- It was also stated that Parish Councils would be kept informed about the available services that they may wish to buy into.

- Members requested some clarification over what services the contract covered, and also further information about the regularity of sweeping and zoning of the area?
- Members were informed that the frequency with which a street is swept depends on the amount of litter expected and the cleanliness standards as set out in the Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse (Environmental Protection Act 1990). In determining a minimum level of cleanliness, the Council is required to categorise its area into zones based on the type of area and level of public usage i.e. town centre, residential, rural.
- Members were given detail that the cleansing operations are based on a schedule of frequencies. The standard of cleansing is therefore set down within a legislative framework, with the tender based on delivering an end result not a specified level of input.
- It was stated that there would be no change to the way that Members of the Public and Parish Councils would report breaches of the standard/request urgent action through the One Team and the Open Spaces Manager, but that there would be more ownership from the contractor in terms of customer responses which would hopefully speed up the process.
- Clarification was sought as to the status of the contract in a situation where the Council was merged with another authority, which the reporting officer stated would be novated into the new body.

RESOLVED that:-

- It is resolved that Scrutiny supports the contract award to the Landscape Group from 1st December 2016, onward to Full Council
- It is resolved that Scrutiny supports an ongoing supplementary budget of £13,000pa from 2017/18 and a supplementary budget of £4,332 for 2016/17; onward to Full Council.

SC 30 **Scrutiny Committee Work Plan.**

(Copy of the Forward Plan for 2016/17, circulated with the agenda.)

- Members were reminded that this was their opportunity to suggest items for the Work Programme – all requests will be considered using the process agreed by the Committee in June 2015. In the first instance, all suggestions should be made to the Scrutiny Team.
- The Deputy Leader clarified for further information that the ‘Stroke Unit’ item that is on the Forward Plan, there is an understanding that there is a large project ongoing there that is looking to give people more care in their homes, and with more supportive discharge policies, and this is apparently going very well, but as the results of this are more fully understood they will then look at the bed capacity issue in due course and be able to report back.

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Forward Plan published on 4th August be noted.

The meeting closed at 5.15pm.